

SUB C7

Abstract of the Disclosure

[illegible]

viewed as a new medium through which customers interact directly with products and services at the time they are using them, to describe their conception of what the product or service should be and how the vendor should work with them to satisfy their needs better. The customer data, suggestions and other information are transmitted to the product vendor's computer where they are collected, analyzed by automated means and presented in automated reports to product managers, product designers and other decision makers. This source of continuous customer-based information may assist in improving products, services and customer relationships both sooner and more accurately, thereby producing strategic business advantages over competitors who do not engage in a similar improvement dialog with their customers. Over time, the cost of incorporating such sub-systems may fall and the impact from using them may rise, producing a greater reliance on customer involvement and customer input into a growing range of business decisions. This may produce a gradual transfer, from vendors to customers, of conceptual commercial guidance, both in individual cases and in aggregate. This invention suggests the emergence of a "partnership capitalist" economy in which a variety of interactive products and services link customers and vendors with networks that are built into those products and services, producing greater understanding, efficiency and accuracy in designing, manufacturing and selling the products, services and lifestyles that customers truly want.

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